

AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOUR OF THE MALTESE POPULATION IN RELATION TO THE GLOBAL SOLAR ULTRAVIOLET INDEX (UVI)



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AIM OF STUDY:

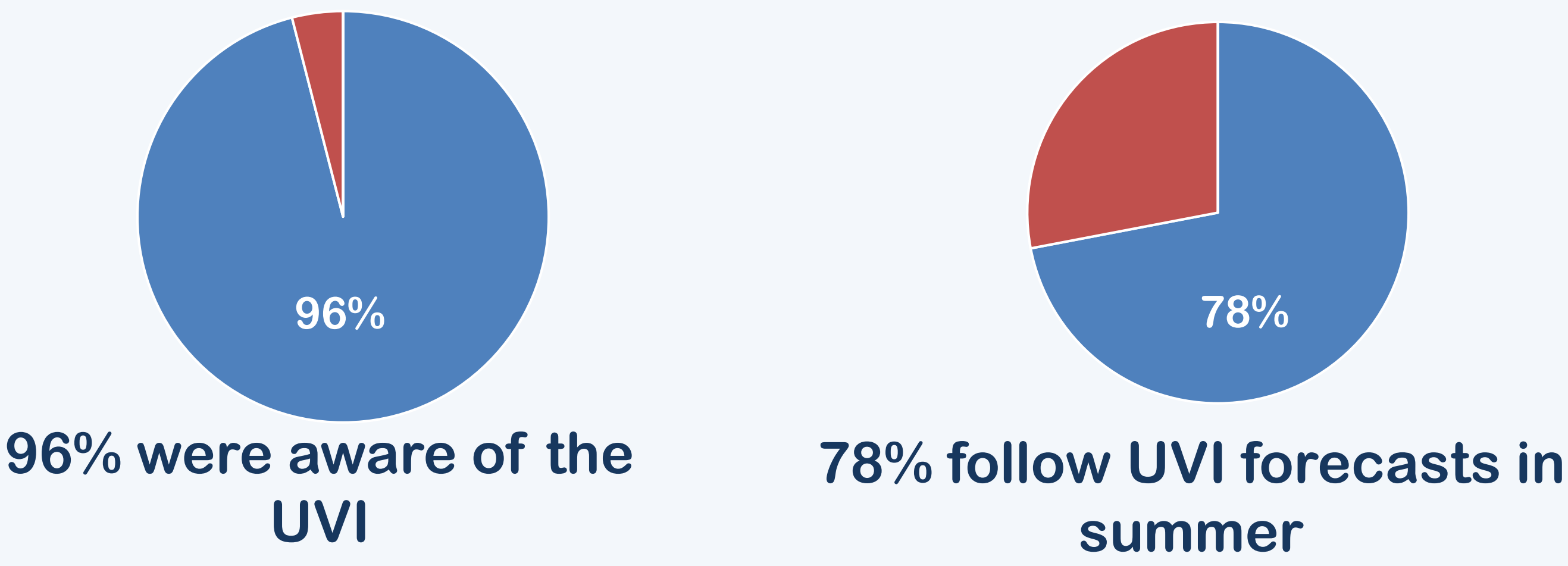
To assess social trends on the awareness of UVI, sun protection and behaviour amongst the Maltese population.

Method:

400 randomly selected persons were interviewed by phone (margin of error - 5%).
Sample was stratified by gender and age according to the 2011 Census.
A modified multistage random sampling method was used.

Results:

Awareness of the UVI



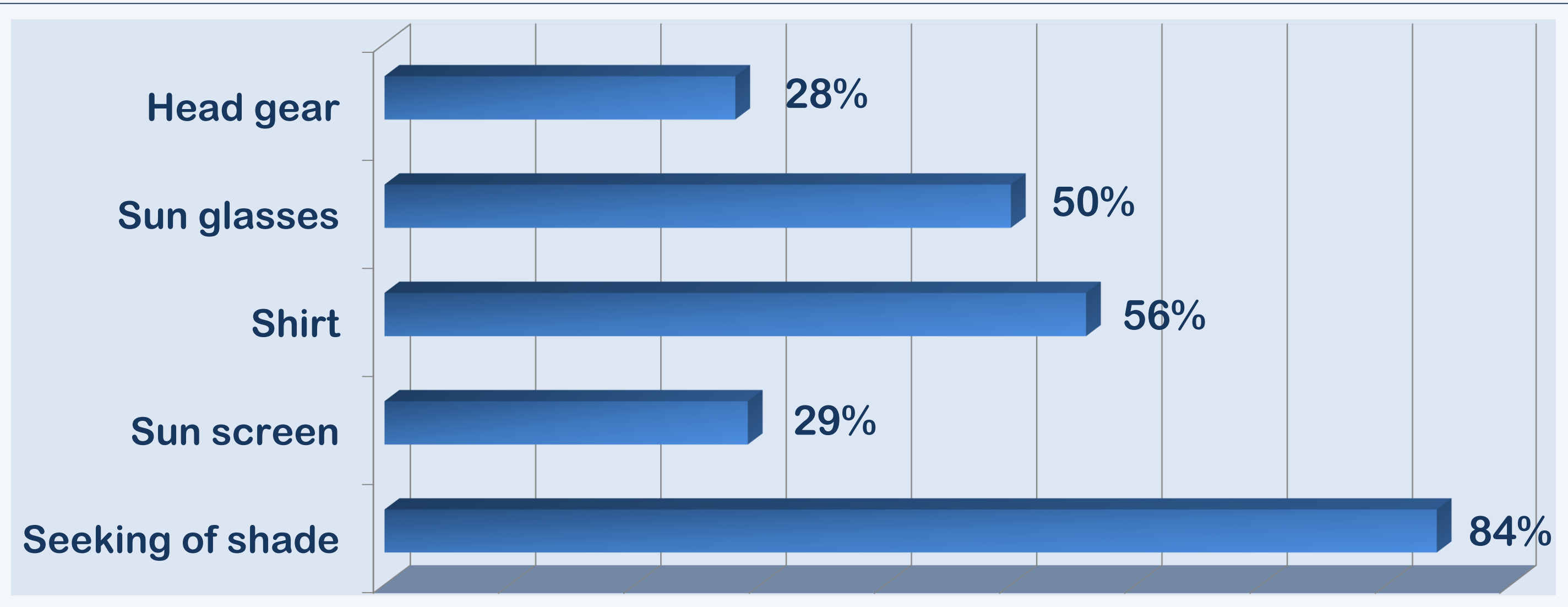
Attitudes in relation to sun exposure is summer

- 79% claimed sun exposure in sun peak hours in summer
- 57% of these at least once a week
- Only 26% claimed that UVI forecasts impacted on their work/ leisure activities

Knowledge of the impacts of excessive sun exposure

- 96% claimed that this can cause skin cancer
- 81% claimed that this can cause eye problems
- 38% claimed that a suntan is never healthy

Use of Sun Protective Items in Summer (when at the beach)



Discussion and Conclusions:

- This study has demonstrated that the observed high awareness of the UVI is not being translated into beneficial sun protection practices.
- The use of sun screen and hats, which are the most promoted sun protective mechanisms in local sun protection campaigns is significantly low.
- Males use more head gear and wear a shirt when they are at the beach significantly more than women do. Females use significantly sunscreen and sunglasses more than males.
- There is a lack of exploitation of the UVI concept in local health awareness campaigns related to protection against UVR.
- There is lack of use of modern media sources in the daily communication of UVI (including UVI forecasts).
- More focused and targeted sun protection campaigns are needed aimed at converting the sun protection awareness into action so as to address the worrying situation of an ever increasing trend in local skin cancer incidence.

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